

# Erin's Law Family Information Night



Erin's Law



# Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Presentation on Erin's Law
  - What school staff learned
  - What parents should know
- Questions



1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys are sexually abused  
by the age of 18.



# What is Erin's Law?

Erin's Law is named after childhood sexual assault survivor, Erin Merryn, who is the founder and President of Erin's Law.

After Erin introduced the legislation in her home state of Illinois, the bill was named "Erin's Law" after her. Illinois was the first state by law to mandate child sexual abuse prevention beginning on January 24, 2013. As of June 2018 Erin's Law has been passed in 35 states.



# What is Erin's Law?

“Erin's Law” requires that all public schools in each state provide prevention-oriented child sexual abuse instruction which teaches:

- **Students** in grades preK – 12th grade, age-appropriate techniques to recognize child sexual abuse and tell a trusted adult
- **School personnel** all about child sexual abuse
- **Parents & guardians** the warning signs of child sexual abuse, plus needed assistance, referral or resource information to support children who are sexually abused as well as their families



# Why Erin's Law?

The purpose of Erin's Law is to teach students about:

- Safe and unsafe touches
- Safe and unsafe secrets
- Personal body safety
- Safety in relationships
- Safe adults they can go to if they are being abused

# Why Erin's Law?

## Erin Merryn Testimony





# Warning Signs of Abuse Shared with Teachers

Common warning signs of physical and sexual abuse of children and teenagers include:

- Bruises
- Changes in appetite
- Wearing inappropriate clothing such as long sleeve shirts in warm weather.
- Acting aggressive towards siblings/peers
- Defiance
- Acting out or displaying disruptive behavior
- Coming to school too early or not wanting to go home
- Changes in grades
- Cheating and lying





# Steps to Take if a Student Discloses Shared with Teachers

- Do not act shocked. The student chose you because they felt comfortable/safe sharing with you.
- Praise the student by telling them they did the right thing by telling you
- Do not pry the student for information. Do not ask leading questions.
- Let the student know they are safe now
- Make the student as comfortable as possible
- Reassure the student that this is not their fault and you believe them.
- Explain that you will have to get help from another adult at school.
- Notify your building administrator(s) as soon as possible.



# Mandated Reporting

All school staff are mandated reporters and if a school employee suspects that a student is the victim of physical or sexual abuse, they must contact DCFS right away and notify their building administrator(s). Common situations that require reporting are:

- A student is showing warning signs of being abused.
- A student has stated that he or she is being abused.
- A student has stated that another student has been abusing them.
- A student has reported viewing inappropriate pictures or videos on their own or with an adult.



# For Parents/Guardians: Warning Signs (Children)

Nightmares

Bed wetting

Aggression

Isolating oneself

Change in academics

Acting out sexually

Suicidal thoughts

Exhibits adult sexual behaviors, knowledge, and language

Fear of certain people, places, activities

Mood swings: Rage, Anger, Fear, anxiety, insecure or withdrawn

Resisting removing clothes when appropriate times (bedtime, bathtime)

Trouble sleeping

Change in appetite Depression

Feeling shameful or guilty

Withdrawal from someone

Running away from home



# For Parents: Warning Signs (Teens)

- Eating Disorders
- Self Injury
- Drug and Alcohol Abuse
- Promiscuous activity
- Running away
- Suicidal ideation
- Depression and Anxiety
- Fear
- Academic problems



## Possible Signs of an Adult Abusing a Child:

- Giving a child special attention
- Trying to spend a lot of time alone with a child
- Buying child expensive gifts or giving them money
- Treating a child as a “favorite” from other children
- Physical affection towards child such as kissing, hugging, holding hands, or wanting to be very close to a child



## If a Child Discloses to You:

- Listen to the child
- Let them know they did the right thing by telling
- Tell them this is not their fault
- Say you believe them
- Let child know they are safe now and won't be hurt again
- Report abuse immediately to police



# Erin's Law Lessons in EPCUSD 401

Grade Level	Book/Lesson
Pre-School	Book: <u>Some Parts are Not for Sharing</u>
Kindergarten/1st/2nd	Book: <u>Your Body Belongs to You</u>
3rd/4th/CORE 1st-5th	Book: <u>An Exceptional Children's Guide to Touch</u>
5th	Trusting Yourself: Internal Alarm (from Sycamore School District)
6th-12th	Healthy Relationships: Love Is Respect Health Teachers, SW



# Lesson Timeline 2020-2021

## EC through 5th Grade

Lessons will occur from October 19- 29th

## 6th through 12th Grade

Lessons will occur within your student's Health class at various points throughout the school year.





# Resources

- [Erin's Law for Parents](#)